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REVIEW

Tracts 1654

OF A

PAMPHLET,

LATELY PUBLISHED,

ENTITLED,

“ REMARKS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE
MEDICAL PROFESSION, AND ON THE
PRESENT STATE OF MEDICAL
PRACTICE IN IRELAND.”

“ Interest speaks all sorts of languages, and acts all sorts of parts, even
that of the disinterested person.”

DUKE DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD.



PRINTED BY DANIEL GRAISBERRY.

1820.



A REVIEW, &c.

WHEN first we took up this pamphlet and cursorily looked over a few passages, we were pleased to find that the abuses of a profession which “lightens the pressure of sickness, smooths the bed of anguish, and affords consolation to the mind oppressed by care and bodily suffering,” were the subjects of consideration. And we were still more pleased to find that the author who had undertaken to “assert the rights and uphold the dignity” of this profession had set out with the independent principle that “because the truth may be objected to by some as opposed to their interests, and unpleasant to others as interfering with their prejudices, it would ill become a writer to accommodate his opinions to those of the interested or the prejudiced.” But our satisfaction was at its *maximum* when we perceived that the motives of this author were purely disinterested, that as one of the “guardians of the public health,” he attended only to the welfare of the Public, and thereby took up that side of the question least to his advantage; that he felt conscious, had he advocated the popular side of the question, that “he might perhaps have acquired an ephemeral reputation, but could never enjoy the consciousness of having endeavoured, as far as was in his power, to contribute to the improvement of his profession; to expose error, and correct abuses.”

Indeed we could not avoid admiring so much disinterestedness ; for as the individuals with whom the author made himself unpopular were the Apothecaries of Dublin, we well knew that these persons had much in their power ; that most frequently an apothecary is much in the confidence of the families which he attends, and that it is almost always in his power to direct their choice in the selection of a physician. We therefore, while we admired the disinterestedness of the proceeding, greatly questioned its prudence, and feared for its results to the author.

Having so far taken an interest in the book, we proceeded to read it with more attention. We regretted much to find that the author's zeal had carried him so far as to write the following passage : “ by *affecting* to superadd a knowledge of medicine to their other qualifications, they (the apothecaries) *render themselves in every respect* incompetent,—medicine is *disgraced* by their incapacity, and *thousands fall a sacrifice* to their want of judgment in the management of diseases which nature alone might have cured.” A good deal displeased at the virulence of this charge of legal murder, and not at all satisfied of the good sense of the conclusion, that apothecaries, by possessing some knowledge of medicine, render themselves in every respect useless members of society, we resolved to be more cautious in our future opinions of this author ; and the more so, when we found numberless such abusive allusions to apothecaries as “ men of independent principles, of scientific habits, and of liberal education, will no longer devote themselves to a profession which places them on a level with *uninformed and shallow pretenders* to knowledge as *profound* and as extensive as their own :”—“ Persons the most uninformed, are in general the most confident and self-sufficient :”—“ but widely different is the case of that unlettered ignorance which prides itself on its

imagined practical knowledge, and blindly pursues the same system without judgment or discrimination :”—“ the facility with which the Public suffer themselves to be deceived by mere pretenders to medical skill.” Nor could we be otherwise than displeased at the illiberality and vanity of the following system of exclusion, “ to be deemed worthy of a place amongst the number of those who have acquired for their profession (i. e. of physic) *a character so exalted*, ought to be a matter of *no easy acquisition*. Admission into such a profession as that of medicine *ought not to be a mere matter of course*, nor should the *high honors* which it confers on those who have earned them, by devoting the principal part of their lives to a study so laborious, be *easily attained by every person* who, neglecting such previous pursuits, shall think fit to aspire to them by shorter methods, and such as scarcely require any preparatory education. Let this once be permitted, and from that moment the respectability of the profession is destroyed.”

Much wondering that mere zeal for the public welfare should lead the author into so much virulence and illiberality, we soon were taught by the following passages that other motives might operate: “ If instead of inquiring into the qualifications of those (i. e. the apothecaries) to whom they entrust their health, and their lives, they place the *most confidence* in him who boasts the most loudly of his superiority; if *neglecting genuine and unobtrusive merit* they encourage *only* those who pretend to universal skill, &c.” These passages, full of meaning, discovered to us at once that the author (for we never had heard of such a physician as Dr. Grattan before) was disappointed in his prospects of success in his profession, that *his genuine and unobtrusive merit* was overlooked by an undiscerning public, and that he was tantalized at seeing that those pretenders

to universal skill, the apothecaries, were preferred to him, and that the *most confidence* was placed in them.

After the professions of disinterestedness which at first had so highly pleased us, we found an “aching void left craving in our breast” when we perceived that the author had been so far off his guard as to disclose the following secret: “It is probable, however, that I should scarcely have engaged in such an investigation (viz. that of enquiring into the injuries done to the Public by ignorant pretenders) had not several apothecaries, and others, practising in the inferior departments of the profession, *lately applied* to be admitted as *licentiates* of the *King and Queen’s College of Physicians*. A measure of this kind appeared to me so inconsistent with *sound policy*, and so decidedly opposed to existing regulations, that from the moment the question was submitted to our consideration, I resisted it in every possible way. In thus objecting to their admission, I altogether disclaim any *selfish* or illiberal motive.” We much feared that any reader of ordinary sagacity who would connect the author’s fears of the apothecaries’ application to become physicians, along with the words *sound policy* and *selfish motive*, might infer something very unfavourable to the doctor’s disinterestedness.

Having now given our readers an idea of the *animus* with which the Pamphlet is written, and the motives of its publication, we shall proceed to present an outline of the manner in which the object is carried into effect.

The author begins with some introductory remarks, which like Sallust’s prefaces, are equally applicable to any book; and from which we learn a few well known truths like the following, that the more important any pursuit is, the more it should be cultivated; that we ought to search after truth; that human nature is prone to error; that

history assures us that errors have always existed ; that mistakes in medicine are mischievous ; and such like. He then informs us that in the infancy of society there were fewer diseases than at present, and that the people, “ *except from casualties* (as we believe is still the case), seldom expired until extreme age had conducted them by slow degrees to the close of their existence.” But an increased population, the establishment of cities, and the refinements of art, multiplied diseases, and medicine “ *was then had recourse to,*” at first by ignorant persons, and afterwards by persons of superior ability ; some of whom excelled others in the management of particular complaints. Thus some might excel in healing wounds and setting fractures, while others were successful in the cure of fevers or dropsies, and each was consulted in such cases as he excelled in. Thus originated the distinct branches of surgery and medicine, which having continued distinct to the present day, it is probable to suppose that the division was founded in reason and experience : yet there are some, he adds, who affect to have discovered that it has been productive only of injury, and that medicine separately practised is deficient in every thing essential : and they stigmatize the physician as incompetent, no matter what his qualifications may be. The author then enters into a discussion of the question, whether medicine be really useful, or merely a system of specious imposition ; but as we conceive that no reflecting mind would conclude otherwise than that physicians are amongst the most necessary and important characters in society, we spare ourselves and our readers the trouble of any details on this subject :

Convinced of the importance to society of the physician, who is there, enquires the author, that would affect to consider his education and qualifications as matters in which the public had no interest ? It would be superfluous, he observes, to dwell on the necessity of a liberal

education as the foundation of the physician's future eminence: he therefore proceeds to show how far scientific habits and the possession of general information assist in the acquisition of medical knowledge, what difficulties oppose the progress of those who have not possessed such advantages, and what the circumstances are which contribute to prevent them from ever becoming good practitioners in medicine.

"The physician receives a classical education, preparatory to his entrance into the University, where he possesses every opportunity of cultivating the most intimate acquaintance with the sciences. Instructed by able professors, and associating with companions of liberal and gentlemanly habits, his conceptions are enlarged, his opinions are in general correct, and his manners accomplished and polite." After four years thus employed, he then applies his attention to pursuits strictly professional; chemistry first attracts his notice,—a study in its application universal, but particularly so to pharmacy. Many of our most valuable remedies are produced by chemical processes, and are more or less active according to the peculiarities of their constitution. Thus metallic mercury is almost inert; when triturated to a black powder it is more active, and if calcined to a red powder it becomes a caustic poison. The author then bursts forth into the following apostrophe: "How opposite are the qualities of calomel and corrosive sublimate!!! While one is an excellent medicine, the other is a most destructive poison, and yet a trifling change in the respective quantities of their ultimate principles is *the only cause* of their extraordinary difference." We recommend the author never to venture on such broad assertions as this; we advise him to use more caution in deciding a question which perhaps may discover the depth of his knowledge; and we think it but friendly to inform him, that on any theory,

the cause which he assigns as the only one, is not the cause at all. Nor would he be so much surprised, as he appears, that the white of egg should impair the powers of corrosive sublimate, if he knew the manner in which it acts. After felicitating himself on the possession of *so much chemical knowledge*, he exclaims "How important then must a knowledge of chemistry be to the physician: or rather, *is he not guilty of the most inexcusable presumption*, who ventures with unpardonable temerity, to direct as remedies, medicines, with the composition of which he is unacquainted."

The author then enters into a defence of the physicians against the imputation of being ignorant of pharmacy. In this we admit the force of his reasoning; we believe it to be an unfounded imputation; but we believe that the apothecary has a better opportunity than the physician of being acquainted with the chemical errors which may be committed in prescriptions; for errors are manifested to his sight, during the mixture of the ingredients, which might escape observation while the ingredients are only written on paper. We also believe that the order of mixing the ingredients, the substance to be used for giving consistence to pills, the forms of medicines, and a variety of manipulations are much better known to the apothecary.

But the author goes a step further: not satisfied with advocating the competency of the physician in pharmacy, he declares, that he attains greater perfection in this branch than the apothecary, whose province it properly is, even though the latter had served an apprenticeship of fourteen years instead of seven: and that this results from the physician's knowledge of chemistry, the study of that science being almost *exclusively confined* to him. We are much surprised at such reasoning as this, and much more

so at the assumption of the position on which it is founded. It is well known that the apothecaries are at present obliged to devote a great portion of their time to chemistry, as it is made a requisite indispensable to the obtaining of a certificate from the Apothecaries' Hall ; and it is well known that their means of obtaining such knowledge are greater than those of the physician, in consequence of their always having the chief chemical preparations at hand for illustrating by experiment what they read. Many of the apprentices study this science in the same school as the physicians themselves; others in that of the Dublin Society; but they are provided with resources within their own profession, during the last few years, by the appointment of a chemical lecturer at their Hall. The present race of apothecaries, therefore, stand a comparison with the physicians in the theory of chemistry, and they exceed them in the practice.

The author feels particularly annoyed at this imputation of ignorance of pharmacy thrown on the physicians, and, thus influenced, he endeavours, by various indirect means, to depreciate the knowledge of the apothecaries. The physician directs the ingredients of the prescription, the apothecary merely mixes them up; the latter is the *mere workman* on whom we should not so far descend as even to bestow a thought. These sentiments are conveyed in the following beautiful allegory, which, for the benefit of our readers, we explain and comment on. “ When we view with feelings of admiration the classic temple (i. e. the latin prescription,) in which every thing (i. e. every medicine) harmonizes, in which nothing is deficient, nothing superfluous, in which light and shade are judiciously contrasted, and pillar and arch, and frieze and cornice are arranged with the purest and most exquisite taste, do we descend to think of the mere workman (i. e. the unhappy apothecary,) who *chiseled* the marble (i. e. the medicine) of

which it is constructed? To the *divine genius* of the architect, (i. e. the physician's, perhaps Dr. Grattan's own divine genius), by whom it was designed, we give the undivided tribute of praise, &c." This continued metaphor, which has been drawn by thousands of barren writers, does not, however, depreciate the value of the workman; for without his art, the divine genius of the architect could never have produced a single pillar of the temple: the one produces the reality, the other the semblance.

The author then adduces facts to prove the acquaintance of the physicians with pharmacy, even in the opinion of the legislature: thus they are empowered to publish a national pharmacopœia, according to the formulæ of which, and with its weights and measures, the apothecary must compound. The physicians have a right to reexamine persons rejected by the apothecaries, and a deputation from each profession has a right to examine the medicines kept by apothecaries, with power to destroy bad specimens. "These are facts sufficient (he asserts) to prove that physicians must possess a knowledge of pharmacy." But without denying the thing to be proved, we deny the validity of the proof. It is true that the physicians do construct the pharmacopœia without the aid of the apothecaries, and this is one of the causes of its numerous imperfections. Those persons who are in the daily habit of observing the inadequacy of one process, the inconvenience of another, the unnecessary expense or delay of another, the total failure of another, and the various other defects, ought surely to be consulted in a subject wherein every other motive should give place to a desire of really benefiting the community. As to the weights which the author assures us the apothecaries are obliged to use, we must inform him, as he does not seem to know it, that they are all miscalculated in the pharmacopœia, and that the apothecaries do not use them.

The legislature, it is true, wisely vests in the physicians the power of reexamining candidates who appeal after rejection by the apothecaries, but the right is vested primarily in the hands of the latter, and is not granted to the former on the grounds of superior knowledge, but merely to guard against the possibility of injustice; and with the same view, the physicians, in conjunction with the apothecaries, are allowed to visit shops, and examine medicines, but it is clear that they are not considered competent by themselves.

The author having proved to his satisfaction, what we scarcely ever heard any one deny, that physicians do understand pharmacy, he proceeds with his account of a young physician's studies. The next subject is botany, and after this anatomy and physiology, in both of which our author has made some discoveries deserving of record.

With respect to anatomy, he first argues, that a knowledge of minute anatomy to a physician is quite unnecessary, and that a general knowledge fully answers his purposes. As an illustration of this position he supposes the following case: "Let us suppose that two patients of the same age, and of similar constitutions, labour under fever of the same character; that in the conformation of one of these patients, there is nothing unusual, but that in the other, the various parts of the brain are transposed, the arteries are placed where the veins ought to be, and the nerves have a different origin from what they generally possess, &c.—I wish to know how the physician is to prescribe for the second patient, whose fever presents symptoms exactly similar. If it be answered, that his peculiar conformation should not be suffered to influence the physician in the slightest degree, *and such must be the answer*, what becomes of the stress laid on a know-

ledge of the minutiae of anatomy as the basis of medical practice?"

Not satisfied with proving this, the author next undertakes to prove that the study of minute anatomy renders a physician even less competent to practise. In the foregoing example, he asks, is it not probable that if such a practitioner were to know the anomalous conformation of the patient, he would consider his fever of a peculiar nature, as one peculiarly dangerous, and as therefore *requiring a peculiar mode of treatment*. I know, he adds, that such would be the case, and I know that such patient would have a worse chance of recovery in consequence of the incapacity of his physician, the result of his superior anatomical knowledge."

Here are two consecutive conclusions absolutely incompatible with each other. In the first case the author asserts that the peculiar conformation of the patient would not influence the treatment. In the second case he positively asserts that it would. So that the conclusions are adapted to the necessity of the arguments to be proved.

Under the consideration of the anatomical part of a young physician's studies, the author treats his readers with some physiological opinions which have at least the merit of being true, and which, when divested of their philosophical garb, are recognised to be plain facts so familiar as to be no longer noticed. Thus "the principle of life is essentially different from the other powers which govern the actions of material substances.—In opposition to the unceasing influence of gravitation, vegetables grow upwards, and the ponderous particles of the soil ascend from the root to the summit of the highest tree. Independently of any extrinsic influence animals can move their bodies in all directions, and counteract the ten-

dency of their own weight so as to raise themselves from the earth, an exertion of which inanimate substances are wholly incapable. That inherent power which enables them thus to oppose the force of gravitation, is the principle of vitality, the investigation of which is peculiarly the province of the physician. Both in plants and animals its presence is essential to life ; its extinction constitutes death. The cause from whence this principle proceeds, and the manner in which it is connected with and acts upon matter, are amongst those secrets which the human mind can never fully develope." The whole of the foregoing simply resolves itself into this, that although animals can leap about with great agility, stones can not : that the power which enables them to do so is life : that while this principle exists we are alive, when extinct we are dead ; that is, when we are alive we are alive, when dead we are dead : and he concludes by informing us, that although the investigation of this very surprising and interesting vital principle is the peculiar province of the physician, yet when he has done investigating, his labours are rewarded by finding that he is incapable of understanding any thing on the subject. Well may the physician boast of his peculiar province, and fool indeed must be the man who would encroach on it.

After making some observations on pathology, the last study of the young physician which the author mentions, he proceeds to consider what appears the main object of his book, namely, the necessity of restricting the apothecary to the manipulations of pharmacy, and surrendering the treatment of diseases to the physician. On this point we entirely agree with him, but not altogether on the same grounds of opinion : and we believe that the generality of apothecaries are convinced of the advantage of such an arrangement, were such an arrangement possible. The apothecary would then be left at home to superin-

tend his shop business, and the preparations of his laboratory. He would then have leisure to prepare all his own medicinal compounds, and he would have them at a less expense than those obtained from druggists. He would avoid the continual anxiety of mind that attends those who have the important trust reposed in them of preserving the lives of their fellow creatures. He would avoid the immense trouble of visiting every day a great number of persons at remote distances from each other, for which he is perhaps paid no otherwise than by the sale of some trifling medicine not exceeding half a crown in price, and to obtain this he must first make his visit, then send his servant with the medicine, and go himself the next day to enquire its success. Now admitting the intrinsic value of the medicine to be but one fourth, he has for each of these three journies about eight pence, and not even that until the expiration of a year or more. Would not a greater reward be given to a hireling porter taken from his stand to execute any mission? The apothecary, by not practising, would also frequently save himself from the humiliating suspicion of prescribing for his own advantage; yet he would lose nothing, for some one must prescribe, and the prescription must be compounded by some apothecary.

But it is not probable that this arrangement can be ever carried into effect. The poor, it is true, can with a good deal of delay and trouble procure the gratuitous and precarious attendance of a dispensary physician; but the class of people immediately above those cannot, and would not even seek it. Such persons, and even those who are greatly their superiors in point of wealth, are not at all times able to fee a physician, were his demands but half or quarter what they are, especially in a protracted illness. In such cases an apothecary is applied to: the misery of disease is not aggravated by immediate claims, which the

sufferer is unable to meet ; the apothecary does not resign the patient to his fate, even if he see no prospect of emolument ; he is watchful and constant to the last moment, when death or recovery renders his attendance no longer necessary, and in the latter case he allows a long period for the person's industry to supply him with the means of compensation. These are advantages which the public feel and acknowledge, and it is quite in vain for any pamphlet to attempt to convince them that they ought not to seek the assistance of those men from whose attentions they receive health and life, at a moderate expense, and after a long period of credit.

The author, in order to prove the necessity of restricting the three branches of the medical profession to their proper limits, adverts to the advantages derived from the division of labour in general, and observes that "to adduce instances illustrative of this is almost superfluous," yet he immediately betakes himself to the trite illustration of pin-making. He then attempts, in various ways, to prove the incompetency of the apothecary to practise medicine.

The author seems particularly anxious to remove from the public mind an opinion, which we think it would have answered his views much better if he had not stated so fully and so forcibly as he has done ; for, in our opinion, instead of removing this favourable impression of the apothecaries from the public mind, he has only confirmed it. The passage runs thus : "It has been said that apothecaries must understand medicine, because they have an opportunity of observing the practice of different physicians, in consequence of being employed in preparing their recipes. That they can thus ascertain what remedies are the most successful, and must therefore soon become better qualified to practise themselves than a physician, who has

only his own experience to direct him." We conceive that the Public will be still more confirmed in this opinion (which is indeed a very general one) when they find that the doctor can attack it with no more effective weapons than the following: "if we were to be told that the person who prepares the colours, and furnishes the materials employed in painting, could, in consequence of the various orders given to him by different painters, soon acquire such a knowledge of the art as to be enabled to rival the most successful efforts of the first masters, we should smile at the folly of the assertion. If we were to be gravely assured that an extensive manufacturer of surgical instruments must necessarily be an expert surgical operator, we should at once suppose, that the person who could thus seriously express himself was decidedly insane." We conceive it almost superfluous to remind our readers, that there is no analogy between a cutler who merely makes a surgical instrument, who never sees it in use, and who never reads on the subject of an operation, with an apothecary, who, beside being familiar with the nature of compounding the medicines, studies in his dispensatory, and in various authors, their medicinal properties, and their application in disease; who has constant and necessary access to the bedside of the patient, where he can observe their effects; who has continual opportunity of prescribing them himself, beginning with unimportant diseases, and proceeding gradually through the whole catalogue of human misery; and finally, who by attending the medical lectures of the University professor, generally derives his knowledge from the same source as the physician himself. Obviously false as this analogy is, the author assures us, that although he has *considered the subject with some attention, he does not possess sufficient discrimination* to detect any distinction between the examples he has adduced. Granted,—and had he not pronounced this mor-

tal sentence on his own reputation for common sense, we should not have been accessory to its destruction.

We conceive that the medical education of the young physician does not give him so great a preeminence as is asserted. The apothecary studies for seven years, the physician's studies are completed in three; in that period he has to divide his attention between many different subjects, and no more than six months are allotted to the lectures on the practice of physic. At the end of the fourth year,* his head confused with desultory knowledge, he issues forth from the University to practice, and to learn by slow degrees, how great is the difference between knowledge acquired by precept, and that acquired from practice.

Our author conceives that an acquaintance with medicine and its concomitant branches of knowledge cannot be attained by the apothecary along with a knowledge of his own department, "the human understanding is too limited to comprehend at the same time so many various objects." Yet he endeavours to prove that the physician is not only well acquainted with all his own departments, but in consequence of his knowledge of chemistry, that he is enabled to arrive at greater excellence in pharmacy than the apothecary, were the latter to serve an apprenticeship of fourteen years instead of seven, to pharmacy alone. This difference in the nature of physicians from that of apothecaries is very surprising, and can only be explained by supposing them a different race of beings.

The author not satisfied with *clearly convincing* his readers that the opportunities of a young apothecary do not enable him to attain a knowledge of medicine, proceeds to show that "the circumstances under which he is placed actually oppose his progress in medicine,—long con-

* The fourth year is devoted to attending Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital.

tinued application to mechanical occupations has a tendency to contract the mental powers, and incapacitate them from scientific pursuits," and he concludes that because an apothecary is taught to spread plasters and measure fluid ounces, his occupations are rather opposed to medical science than subservient to it. Does this gentleman seriously suppose that spreading plaster with a knife, or pouring a liquid into a measuring glass, has such influence during seven years on the mind, as for ever to incapacitate it from attaining what young men, often of inconsiderable talents, intended to be physicians, are able to acquire in three years.

Newton spent much of his time at grinding optical glasses, but this purely mechanical occupation did not disqualify him from afterwards ascertaining the laws of their refraction. Franklin was constantly employed in mechanical contrivances; he descended so far as to make a paper kite, yet with this he drew down the lightning from the skies, and disarmed the thunder-cloud of its terrors. Did the prosecution of the profession of an apothecary contract the mental powers of Scheele, Davy, and Klaproth, and disqualify them from making discoveries in science, which have dazzled the world with their splendour, and have exalted the human mind a degree nearer to the nature of superior beings. Did not Berthollet Vauquelin, Gay Lussac, Thenard, and the whole constellation of philosophical genius now illuminating this hemisphere pass their time amidst mortars, crucibles, and furnaces, during their whole career. Have not the most eminent physicians in Dublin and London been educated as apothecaries, and does not every one but Dr. G. admit that this education is the best introduction to the profession of medicine. How could he think of insulting the eminent physicians of this city, who served their apprenticeships to pharmacy, with so indecorous an assertion, as that their former pursuits have

for ever disqualified them from the attainment of professional eminence. And how could he suppose that a discerning Public could be so far misled as to give credit to a feeble assertion, unsupported by reference to examples, in contradiction to every man's daily experience, and in opposition even to common sense.*

As to the author's observations on the arrangement of apothecaries' shops, the qualifications of the apprentices, &c., we can assure him he is entirely mistaken. In shops where there are young apprentices, there are also seniors under whose authority the former are placed, and that these seniors are qualified persons is proved by the fact that mistakes of consequence scarcely ever occur, although the author informs us, that the daily prints are so constantly filled with accounts of poisoning by mistakes, and that *we are so much in the habit of reading of such accidents, that they scarcely produce any effect on us(!!!)* We know not what newspaper the doctor may read; we see no such accounts, and we appeal to every individual, whether or not he is *accustomed* to hear of such occurrences, or whether of late years he hears of such accidents at all.† In all well regulated

*. Many of the most eminent physicians that the world ever produced, emanated from the profession of Pharmacy. Monroe, W. Hunter, Cullen, and Smellie, were apothecaries. So also were Sir W. Knighton, Sir M. Tierney, and Dr. Babington of the present day. The celebrated Lemery was in early life an apothecary, but afterwards studied physic. Our celebrated countryman Dr. Lucas was similarly circumstanced. Mr. Brand whose scientific acquirements are beyond question, and who is the successor of Davy in the Royal Institution, is apothecary to his majesty. The famous Doctor Macbride whose name, as our author deigns to acknowledge, will be transmitted to posterity, commenced his career as an apothecary, became then a surgeon in the navy, and after practising a number of years in Dublin, obtained an honorary degree, and never legitimately belonged to the College of Physicians of Ireland. Dr. Murray of Edinburgh is another instance.

† There have been recorded in the London journals, within the last four years, two cases of persons poisoned by oxalic acid, bought from druggists for the purposes of domestic economy, and swallowed by mistake, instead of salts.

shops the dangerous medicines are kept in secluded corners, in bottles of uncommon shape, marked with a conspicuous and peculiar label, and every precaution is taken to prevent such medicines from being confounded with others of less activity. As to the danger which the author apprehends of confounding medicines "in the names of which only a trifling difference exists," we must relieve him from his fears on that head, for in the first place we conceive that no two names can be more dissimilar than *submurias hydrargyri sublimatum*, and *urias hydrargyri corrosivum*; and in the next place the apothecary's apprentice, in this instance, instead of being the cause of mistake, is often the corrector of it, in a way that we think it inexpedient to explain: and he is almost the first day of his apprenticeship put on his guard against this very error, and all such wherein poisons are concerned.

The author then brings forward a variety of detached arguments to prove the incompetency of apothecaries, and the infatuation of the Public, who employ them. But as these arguments appear to be trifling and inconclusive, and only constructed for peculiar views, we pass them by without further notice than to express our fears, that the public will not be convinced by them, that the order of things which has stood the test of experience during some centuries, and which has so much benefited the community, will not be subverted by our author's zealous but feeble efforts, in which the wish to accomplish his aim without the power, is very conspicuous. We are much amazed that any person who wishes to sustain a character for common sense in society should endeavour to subvert an order of things, that is indispensable to the welfare of the Public, without showing in what manner the danger resulting from his success should be averted. If the Public must not consult an apothecary in cases of minor importance, and if they have not the means of consulting a phy-

sician, what are they to do, unless to bear with the evil, allow it to run its course, and patiently await the approach of death.

Towards the close of this valuable pamphlet, the author entirely loses his self-possession: the disease of mind under which he labours has, in this place, suffered an exacerbation, and in his phrenzy he discharges any missile which happens to be within his reach. Martin Luther, similarly operated on by a diseased mind, once forgot himself so far as to throw his ink-bottle at the devil, with whom he fancied himself in a warm controversy upon religion. The blot, it is said, remains on the wall to this day; but it certainly remains a blot on his reputation for moderation and self-possession: and we consider that the two luminaries of medicine and theology are in this respect similarly circumstanced. Our author first indulges in the following lamentation—"The apothecary prescribes in all cases!—he seldom permits a physician to be employed, unless he considers the patient past recovery!!" As the paroxysm increases, he sputters out abuse in every direction: the physician, he declares "too often conceals the apothecary's mistakes, and consults with him precisely as if he were a regularly educated practitioner." "His presence only serves to hide the blunders, and protect from blame persons of whose incompetency he is thoroughly convinced:" and he makes some very unhand-some allusions to the physician's ordering medicine unnecessarily, which we forbear to repeat. "The apothecary may plead *ignorance* as his excuse, but the physician, who is a party to the delusion, (shame!) can be actuated only by *corrupt* and *mercenary motives*." But as outrageous lunatics in their hallucinations are never consistent for any great length of time, the unhappy author, affrighted, as the paroxysm subsides, at the enormity of his own conduct, declares he is confident, "that there is not to be found

amongst the *members* of the College, a single physician who could thus act." Or, as it is known, that madmen are the most cunning class of animals in the world, perhaps he means slyly to insinuate, that the physicians who connive at the legal murder of their fellow-creatures are not *members* of the College, but belong to some other denomination of physicians.

It were in vain to apply reasonable arguments to such aberrations, for as such they will be recognized by the public. To say that apothecaries call in physicians only when they consider the patient past recovery, is an assertion so monstrous that we will not contradict it, further than by asking, is there any assignable reason why the apothecary has such an objection to a physician's assistance: why he seeks it at the very time when he ought to do his utmost to avoid it, if he wished to conceal from him the fatal effects of his own ignorance: and is it to be supposed, that any man would be so far infatuated as, by refusing medical assistance, to incur, should the patient die, the imputation of having been the cause of that catastrophe, by his ignorance and self-sufficiency?

Of the lurking policy that dictated the pamphlet under consideration, we cannot give our readers a better instance than by adducing an ill-advised paragraph which the author has been so infatuated as to publish. "The conduct of the physicians is in some respects injudicious, and we ourselves are to a certain extent responsible for the evils which I have endeavoured to expose. If physicians will consult with apothecaries, and meet them at the appointed hour, on successive days, during the whole course of a long protracted fever, what are the public to infer? The natural inference is, that the physician must derive some information from the apothecary, and that he does not consider the absence of the apothecary from his shop

as a matter of any consequence. This again leads to other conclusions, until at last it is supposed that the *apothecary having seen so much of the physicians practice, must be as well qualified to prescribe as the physician himself, of course on all future occasions he is applied to, and the physician no more thought of, &c.*" Here it is palpable that he assigns no reason for his objection to allowing the patient the benefit that will be presently shown to result from a meeting of the physician with the apothecary, except that such meetings tend to encrease the confidence of the public in the apothecary, and to prevent the necessity of calling in a physician so frequently as otherwise might be deemed expedient. But his fears are groundless ; for we suppose that other physicians have at least *as much* observation and good sense as our author, and as it appears that they continue this practice of meeting apothecaries, we believe that they experience no such results, and that they consider it necessary to continue it: they well know, and we know, that the Public have more confidence in the physician than in the apothecary; and that whenever a disease becomes no longer of inconsiderable magnitude, the apothecary, patient, and friends, each for his separate repose of mind, and all for the patient's benefit, agree to call a physician, and that the latter generally attends until the patient no longer requires his aid. We know also, when a patient dies in the hands of a practitioner no matter whether he be a physician, surgeon, or apothecary, that the survivors often scrutinize the past conduct and treatment of the attendant with an eye that is more inclined to discover causes of blame than of praise ; and we know that this is particularly the case with regard to an apothecary. The apothecary therefore, on the patient's and his own account, always feels great satisfaction at the removal of so great a weight of responsibility from his mind as the treatment of a formidable disease ; consequently he is always solicitous to obtain so desirable a relief as the

attendance of a physician ; and the moment he perceives a corresponding disposition on the part of the patient's friends (which naturally does not happen until apprehension suggests it) he avails himself of the opportunity.

On the subject of a physician's meeting an apothecary, it is easy to show that when the former is called over the latter, it is absolutely necessary that there should be a meeting : and any physician, who through a fastidious adherence to mistaken notions of professional dignity would refuse such a meeting should not, and would not be employed by the Public, as such refusal might cost the patient his life. It is indispensable for the physician to know the previous state of the patient, and what medicines he has been taking. Without this precaution, the physician might commence the active exhibition of a remedy which the apothecary had already pushed to a great extent, and which ought perhaps at this period to be relinquished or administered with more caution ; as the accumulated effects might destroy life. Or the physician might prescribe a medicine which, by chemical action in the stomach on one previously given by the apothecary, might produce a poisonous compound, instances of which chemical action could be adduced were such necessary. Further, if a certain effect be required which an apothecary has been disappointed in producing by a particular medicine, the physician may probably make attempts with the same medicine, being unacquainted with its failure in the hands of the apothecary : thus so much time, very valuable at that crisis, would be lost, and the patient would derive no advantage from the visit of the physician. These facts are well known to the physician of reflection, and accordingly, when called over an apothecary, he does not commence with a struggle about medical supremacy, but avails himself of any thing that may tend to the benefit of his patient.

It is even advisable that the meetings should be continued beyond the first day. There are a variety of practical facts, relating to prescription, of which the physician may not be aware, and to which some attention is necessary. With such facts the apothecary's daily experience makes him perfectly acquainted : and so sensible are the physicians of this, that those of the greatest eminence do not fail to avail themselves of the apothecary's practical knowledge, and we are convinced not without advantage to the patient.

Could a young physician of fine or gentlemanly feeling, when called over an apothecary of age and experience, act otherwise than to pay the respect of meeting him, to enquire the patient's previous symptoms, and ascertain the medicines last taken ; and would not common politeness dictate to him the courtesy of stating his view of the disease, and of its cure, if he did not actually confer with him as to the probability of its success. We would venture to assert that scarcely one of that respectable body of professional characters, whose judgment has been matured by some years experience of life, would act in the manner recommended by the author. And we well know that some of the most eminent men in the profession of medicine and surgery,—men whose education, talents, wealth, and independence of mind have set them above suspicion, are remarkable for their polite attention to the apothecary ; whether or not this gentlemanly deportment has injured them in the public opinion, or diminished their practice may be estimated by reference to their splendid equipages, elegant and well appointed residences in town and country, by their rank in their profession and in society, and by the respect paid to them by every member of the community. Whether or not an opposite line of conduct succeeds as well, those only can declare who adopt it. But it requires no consideration to give as our

decided opinion that a physician, who, inflated with consciousness of professional superiority debarb a patient in these moments of debilitated judgment, from the comfort of seeing the one consulted in whose knowledge of his constitution he has every reliance, acts inhumanly to the patient and uncourteously to the apothecary: and we would be greatly inclined to doubt, in the case of such a physician, that although "instructed by able professors, and associating with companions of liberal and gentlemanly habits, his opinions are in general correct, and his manners accomplished and polite."

But we could pardon all the mistaken arguments, all the professional stratagems, and the various misrepresentations made use of in this pamphlet, so long as it contemplated merely the restriction of apothecaries to a certain line of occupation, and the reservation to the physicians of the emoluments arising from the treatment of disease. There are, however passages that, we are sorry to say, seem indicative of feelings which we forbear to designate. One of his objections to having an apothecary at a consultation is, that the physicians "feel that they are under the *surveillance* of a person who may have a partiality towards one physician, and a prejudice against another, and who may pass what comment he pleases on their opinions and practice." Meaning, no doubt, that the apothecary will, according to his fancy, misrepresent to the patient and friends, the opinions of a physician if he be prejudiced against him, and thus become the assassin of his character. Again, in another case, which he supposes, he says, "it would probably be suggested (by the apothecary) that he (the physician) knew nothing of the disorder, or that he *wished to protract its duration (!!!)* by not ordering such medicines as some other physician had prescribed with the greatest success in a case exactly similar: that it was a proof of the greatest avarice and illiberality to take his

fee for doing nothing ; in short, that he ought to be immediately dismissed, and that Doctor ———— should be sent for.”

On these base charges we offer no opinion : we would blush to suppose, that in the whole profession of apothecaries there is one individual who would be guilty of such debasing craft, such undermining villany, and such a perfidious abuse of confidence. And, unless by such a proof as the one now before us, we could not have been persuaded that in the whole profession of medicine there was one man capable of conceiving, much less of harbouring such unworthy suspicions. We appeal to every member of society who has had experience of apothecaries, whether or not he has witnessed such conduct ; whether the apothecary does not always treat the opinions of a physician with respect, and endeavour to preserve confidence between him and the patient, instead of making use of stratagem and falsehood to depreciate his practice, and injure his reputation. We can enter into the feelings of a class of men who have been educated as, and have associated with gentlemen, at being thus held up to the Public as an association of insidious designing persons, whose object is imposture and fraud, and who consider as enemies, and denounce as such, all members of the other profession who will not become accessories to their rapacity.

We regret much that such an exposure should be made to the Public of that jealousy which has been occasionally manifested by a few of the junior physicians towards the apothecaries ; and we do not hesitate in pronouncing that such aggressions as the pamphlet under consideration are very badly calculated to produce that unanimity amongst the three branches of the medical profession so essential to the respectability of each, and to the best interests of the community. The book, fortunately for the Public (should

it be read, which we doubt) although manifesting some *astutia*, does not possess sufficient to conceal its real object. But supposing it successful in deluding the Public, in what would consist the victory of its author? He would destroy their confidence in a class of men whose services have been long acknowledged: he would cause them to prefer enduring the disease, rather than seek assistance from persons to whose ignorance and rapacity they might fall a sacrifice: and the sufferer would die a victim between his suspicions of the apothecary and his inadequacy to meet the just demands of a physician. Dr. Grattan would then triumph in a victory obtained at the expense of the lives of thousands of his fellow-creatures, and his name would be transmitted to the latest posterity, but like that of Eratostratus.

The last although not the least important object which our author conceives it *expedient* to discuss, is the small quantity of medicine with which a physician who is an adept in his art can cure diseases; and as he speaks so much in praise of this qualification, and declares that if “a physician can cure his patient with less medicine than another is accustomed to use, he must be considered decidedly superior to the latter in skill and knowledge of his profession,” a reader of ordinary sagacity would conclude, as no man unnecessarily depreciates his own “skill and knowledge of his profession,” that our author can cure diseases “with less medicine than another is accustomed to use,” and therefore this sagacious reader, if visited by disease, might recollect the promise of our author, and employ him in preference. This little stratagem certainly displays more cleverness and ingenuity than any other part of the pamphlet; for it is undoubtedly an excellent mode of advertising to the Public that he cures diseases at a less expense than other physicians; and as we conceive that this method will fully answer his expectations, we advise him not to make

known this recommendatory qualification through the medium of any news-paper, as that method would be somewhat (though on reflection perhaps scarcely) less respectable than the present.

We have now taken a survey of the chief topics embraced by this pamphlet, and have endeavoured to administer justice between the parties concerned as rigorously as the importance of the subject required. Of any importance which the subject may possess, no part we conceive belongs to the book, as its misrepresentations could be productive of no injurious consequences. The author being scarcely known as a physician ; the design, obviously the promotion of private views ; and the execution such as we have witnessed ; it could be easily foreseen that the readers of the book must be very few, and that with these few the contemplated injury must be of little avail.

After having discussed the subject matter, our review would be incomplete without some critical observations on the style of our author. As a sort of introduction to this part of the subject, and to advertise the reader of what he is to expect, we transcribe the following passage, which puts in a proper point of view the immense fund of knowledge possessed by our author as a physician. "The profession of the physician is such that in point of general information, no other can enter into the most distant competition with it ; and one in which, to arrive at a reasonable degree of perfection, it is necessary to possess, in addition to natural ability, a more than usual portion of industry and application."

This modest invention, adopted throughout the whole pamphlet, of exorbitantly praising the attainments of physicians in general, and claiming nothing for himself, unless by implication, is very ingenious. We recollect but one

instance in which the author has discovered his real opinion of himself, and this he has done in so artless and ingenuous a manner that we cannot forbear transcribing the passage: the individual alluded to is himself. "As the recorded sentiments of such a meeting must be entitled to more respect than the solitary opinion of any individual, *however respectable, &c.*"

It is a strong proof of discernment when a man is conscious of his own deficiencies. This seems to be the case of our author with regard to metaphorical language; he has ventured on that impetuous tide but once, the eddy turned his brain, he lost his self possession, and enveloped in the *froth*, he never appeared afterwards. His ill success surprized us the more, for the same metaphor has been used by authors in all ages and countries, and we conceived that every one was familiar with its management. Here it is: "The towering column owes its stability to the firmness of the base on which it has been erected; for if the foundation prove insecure, the superstructure however solid in appearance, cannot possibly be permanent. Thus also in medicine unless the physician shall have established his *future* skill on the steady basis of well directed studies, his practice must ever be defective, and his incapacity appear more obvious in proportion to his deficiency in the attainments subordinate to his professional pursuits."

In this metaphor the explication of the metaphorical by the plain sense, beside being redundant, destroys the effect of the whole. Were we to apply Addison's rule for judging of metaphorical language, namely, by representing the subject in a painting, it would have an astonishing effect to see a physician erecting the towering column of his *future skill* (i. e. erecting a column that is not yet created) on the steady basis of well directed studies. We would be quite at a loss how to sketch the figure of a man

fixing up a column not yet hewn from the mountain : but much more at a loss how to represent him as having already done it ; yet this condition is designated in the metaphor by the tense “ shall have.”

If this be a figure of rhetoric, we believe it must be that figure so often made use of by Irish rhetoricians called a *bull* : and the following we conceive to be of the same species : “ and thus contribute still further to encrease the sum of human happiness.” The *sum* of human happiness means the completion of it, the greatest degree of it, because nothing is wanted : therefore to increase the sum of happiness means to encrease that which admits of no encrease.

On grounds not very dissimilar we object to the following : “ to arrive at a reasonable *degree* of *perfection*, &c.” Perfection is superlative in its very sense, and excludes degrees. And such infringements on the involved sense of this and similar words are not the more pardonable because Milton once wrote “ highest perfection,” and Addison forgot himself so far as to write “ more unbounded verse.” We believe however that our author was correct in writing on an another occasion, “ *highest* excellence,” but that it was bad taste, although not absolutely wrong, to add “ in the *inferior* branches.” We are of opinion also that it was bad taste in him, and perhaps altogether incorrect, to write “ with its *general* principles, he is *intimately* acquainted.” The Latin word *intimus* means innermost, recondite, the most deeply concealed, and this we conceive is not analogical with *general* principles” which as every one knows are formed by abstraction or omitting those essential differences which constitute the intimate structure of the various parts.

He was in our opinion also incorrect in writing “ a

living *principle* in a more *exquisite degree*:" it should be "in a more exquisite degree of vitality" or some other quality. For, as has been well observed, we believe by the learned Harris; there may be degrees in qualities, but not in the inhering body; for this does not admit of intension or remission, unless in its attributes.

We feel an objection to the expression "*exerting* all those *qualities*." Qualities are passive, and can not become active until from being adjuncts they are converted into subjects.

Throughout the whole, there are many instances of want of precision: thus "he is enabled to arrive at a greater degree of excellence, and to attain a greater degree of perfection." And "to him is entrusted the existence of those most dear to us, and the lives of the friends to whom we are most attached." Between these two members of the sentence, in each example, there is no difference; little sense is therefore diffused through many words, and feebleness is the result. Many instances occur of feebleness of style, resulting from a feeble conception of the subject. Thus, "if Sir Isaac Newton had endeavoured to excel as a poet, would he have made these astonishing discoveries which have procured for him the title of the first of philosophers; and if Pope had been anxious to equal him in his knowledge of the laws of nature, would his works be read and admired as they now are." When the mind is exalted into a feeling of the sublime by the contemplation of Newton's astonishing discoveries, how disappointed does it feel to find him designated by so vulgar and inartificial a periphrasis as *first of philosophers*; and when the great master of articulate melody is brought to our recollection, how unmusically, meanly, and feebly is the sentence brought to a

close by the languid words “ would his works be *read and admired as they now are*. We consider the whole sentence as affording good examples of climax in the *Bathos*.

In a great many instances, the strength of the style is impaired by a false arrangement of the words in the sentence ; and in some cases this error is of such a kind as to produce obscurity. Speaking of civilization, the author says “ it alone enables us to emerge from barbarism :” *alone* may refer to *it*, or to *enables* ; it might be meant that civilization enables us to emerge from barbarism, and does nothing else, or that civilization, without any other assistance, enables us, &c. In the following example, “ The appearance which the vascular system exhibits to the *anatomist after death*, is, I am convinced, &c,” if the reader will understand that the appearance in question is not exhibited to a dead anatomist, more is due to his own sagacity than to the author’s perspicuity in the collocation of his words. The following instance of obscurity, and even of a wrong sense, results from the improper choice of the word *alone* in a case where the effect could not be produced by any collocation : “ plain sense, and a mind open to conviction, are alone necessary to enable, &c :” if “ alone” must be retained, the sentence should be read “ are alone sufficient.”

The improper collocation of the members of the following sentence renders the sense extremely obscure, and only discoverable by an effort of reflection : “ In consequence of this superstitious belief, and from its difficulty, and also from the mystery in which it was involved, medicine made but little progress amongst the Greeks.” The reader naturally understands the passage thus “ In consequence of this superstitious belief, and from the difficulty of this superstitious belief, and also from the mystery in which this belief was involved,” and at length he may, or may not discover that “ its” and

“it” refer to “medicine.” The last member should have been the first.

We meet many improperly associated words, as “*passion* for *existence*,” “*soften* the *approach* of death,” “*first* and *greatest magnitude*,” “*long* and *persevering exertions*,” &c. And some improperly associated connecting particles as “whose wants are as few, and whose enjoyments are scarcely greater than those of some of the inferior animals.” Leaving out the interjected circumstance that suspends the sense, the passage will read thus : “whose wants are as few than those of some of the inferior animals.” There are also some mixed metaphors as “smooths the bed of anguish,” “unlettered darkness,” and some vicious epithets as “unlettered ignorance,” that is ignorant ignorance, in opposition no doubt to learned ignorance.

The following is a precious *morceau* highly seasoned for the cloyed palate of a critic. “In the treatment of fever, we constantly have occasion to witness the injurious effects of the doctrine that the disease is always inflammatory, by its countenancing, and tending to encourage the destructive system of *profuse and indiscriminate blood-letting* ; a *remedy which employed with judgment is of all others the most valuable*” !! Thus we are informed that the doctrine in question is *injurious* as it countenances the destructive system of profuse and indiscriminate blood-letting, which system of profuse and indiscriminate blood-letting, when employed with judgment, is a most *valuable remedy*. It is in vain for the author to plead that the relative “which” refers to the subject “blood-letting” separately from its adjunct “indiscriminate ;” in the preceding member, the subject and adjunct are conjointly *in regimine* ; they must therefore continue conjoined, as there is nothing afterwards in the structure of the sentence that in-

dicates a separation, further than the necessity of avoiding a blunder.

There are several instances of bad spelling, of which we recollect “*controled* and *uncontroled* for controlled, *dispatch* for despatch, and *pharmacopœa* for pharmacopœia. These are not errors of the press, for they occur invariably.

There is also an abundance of bad grammar, some of which appears to be attributable to want of reflection, and some to want of knowledge, as appears by the constant repetition of the error. Of the latter kind seems the following: “their simple manner of life, the plainness of their food, and the laborious exertions necessary to procure it in sufficient abundance, secured to the inhabitants of remote antiquity all the advantages that result from temperance and exercise.” It should be “a simple manner of life, plainness of food, &c:” the word “their” in this case is not any part of speech: it is not a pronoun, for if it be, it must stand in place of a substantive to avoid a repetition of the latter: this it does not, as the substantive (*viz.* inhabitants) has not been as yet mentioned, but comes afterwards in the sentence, and the posterior occurrence of the substantive prevents its being represented by the pronoun, because there is no inversion of the members of the sentence, which contain the agent and action. Hence if “their” be not a pronoun, it is nothing, and is equivalent to an inarticulate sound in the utterance of the sentence.

Again: “these lectures must be attended with as much regularity and assiduity as those on chemistry, or the practice of Physic; and at the termination of *his* studies, when examined by the College of Physicians for a license, a perfect acquaintance with the subject is considered essentially requisite.” Here the word “his” is not a part of

speech; it is not a pronoun, for there is no person alluded to as its substantive, either in this sentence, or in those that precede it. In the same way, "when examined" refers to no person.

"These medicines may and often have been confounded." Here the auxiliary *may* has no verb to give it meaning: it should be "may be, and often have been."

"In consequence of each person excelling in his own particular department." It should be "each person's excelling." For "excelling" is here not a participle, but a substantive, its article "the" being expunged by its collocation. "The excelling" means "the state of excelling," and is nothing more than an uncouth mode of expressing "the excellence," it therefore governs "person" in the possessive case. Hence the real structure of the sentence in question is "in consequence of the excelling (or better the excellence) of each person (or each person's excelling) in his own department."

"Though he *do* not devote his entire time to anatomical dissections," should be "does not devote;" for here the conjunction "though" expresses nothing contingent or doubtful; the author has told us, immediately before, that the student devotes his time also to chemistry and pharmacy. He therefore means to say "granting that he does not devote, &c.," which being a positive assertion of a fact excludes the subjunctive mood.

"And if it be neither less extensive *or* less difficult," it should be "nor less difficult;" for in the common language of grammar, the corresponding conjunction of "neither" is "nor," but the ultimate cause of this peculiarity is, that "neither" means "not either:" if the latter words were used in the above sentence, it would be right to use

“or” subsequently, because then the negation would affect the copula: but “neither” transfers the negation to the predicate “less extensive” only, whereas it should affect “less difficult” also, and this cannot be done without the use of “nor.”

The following is an error that we should have supposed could not escape any ear accustomed to correct grammar. “In which the capillaries of any organ are distended previous to death.” The essence of a verb can only be modified by an adverb, which “previous” is not.

Another case of the same kind is as follows: “the physician receives a classical education, preparatory to his entrance into the university.” It should be *preparatively*, for “preparatory” being an adjective could affect only the noun “education;” but every one acquainted with the philosophy of grammar will perceive that this sense could not obtain in the above case.

In the next sentence, there are no less than three cases of bad grammar. “I have seen instances of patients, who a few hours previous to their death, exhibited marks of apparent inflammation, tending rapidly to gangrene, and which state clearly depended on a deficiency of nervous energy.” It should be “previously;” for although “a few hours previous to death” is right, while independently taken, yet when an action is connected with the anteriority of the occurrence, this anteriority becomes an affection to the action. The second grammatical error in the sentence is the insertion of the copulative “and,” for it only apparently, not really connects the two members. The third error lies in the use of the relative pronoun “which,” for it does not establish any relation with the preceding member, nor does it represent a substantive, inasmuch as the existence of the “state,” as such is not yet asserted. The

sentence should run thus, "I have seen instances of patients, who a few hours *previously* to their death, exhibited marks of apparent inflammation, tending rapidly to gangrene, a state clearly depending on a deficiency, &c., or a state which clearly depended on &c."

These specimens we consider sufficient : had we wished to multiply them, there is scarcely a page that would not have afforded some new instance. We would not have taken so much notice of these errors in style and grammar, but that the author has boasted so much of the profound learning and extraordinary acquirements of a young physician. We therefore expected that we should derive the greatest improvement and pleasure from the purity and elegance of his composition ; and that

" *Per læve severos effundat junctura unguis.*"

Disappointed however in every page, we thought it but friendly to advise this young author to recommence his studies, in order to prepare himself better for his next publication ; and to convince him of the necessity of so doing, we adduced such examples of his errors as our memory retained. We shall now proceed to present a summary of our opinions of this candid, impartial and disinterested production.

The object is manifestly to impress the reader with an exalted idea of the literary and scientific attainments of physicians ; and by degrading in an inverse ratio the education, capability, habits, and moral character of apothecaries, to destroy the confidence of the Public in them, and secure to the physicians exclusively the treatment of diseases. Concerning the attainments of physicians, although there may be *one* or two exceptions, we see no cause of dissent: they certainly have considerable oppor-

tunities, and they are in general men of information, capacity, gentlemanly deportment, and moral habits. We admit that the science of medicine is better understood by physicians of extensive practice and experience than by apothecaries, but we deny that the same holds with regard to the junior practitioners in medicine. That the practice of medicine should be given up to the physicians, were such a thing possible, we are clearly of opinion ; not on the grounds stated by our sapient author, but because it is the physician's province ; because, by surrendering it, the apothecary would be relieved from a most oppressive load of anxiety, trouble, and humiliation ; and because he would then be enabled to conduct his proper business with much more profit to himself. Although we are conscious that this change would be to the advantage of the apothecary, we well know that the law of Public will prevents his availing himself of it. The Public cannot, and will not dispense with his services in this way, for this good reason that under existing circumstances they are indispensable. But while we believe that this change would be beneficial to the apothecaries, we are far from supposing with this "disinterested guardian of the Public health" that it would be equally so to the physicians: on the contrary it would, we are convinced, be highly prejudicial to their interests. The numerous attendances, the confidential intercourse, intimate acquaintance, and friendly attentions that bring the apothecary so near the patient's heart would, by degrees, be expected from the physician, without any encrease of his emoluments ; they would be also obtained from those who were most anxious to advance themselves, and the concession of them would then become incumbent on the rest. By degrees, the mutual and respectful reserve between the Public and the physician, which has been always the protection of the rights of the latter, would wear away ; and this once removed, the Public would imperceptibly acquire the habit of receiving

the physician's services and attentions, on the same terms as they now do those of the apothecary.

Since therefore the practice of medicine by the apothecaries arises out of the necessities of the case, and is, under existing circumstances, indispensable to the interest of the Public, we consider that it argues, on the part of our author, a great deficiency of good sense to attempt to persuade the Public that they ought to dispense with the services of the apothecary, without showing in what manner they can avail themselves of those of the physician. And we conceive, when instead of showing how the physician's services could be substituted, he attempted to destroy the confidence of the Public in the education, capabilities, and morals of the apothecaries, that he perhaps destroyed the confidence of every party in himself. Perhaps those charges which he has sent forth into the world, not finding a resting place elsewhere, might return to the spot from whence they first winged their flight. And perhaps the Public, easily penetrating the design of the pamphlet, may visit on the contriver the results which he contemplated for others.

The arrangement of the book we disapprove of; it is manifestly the production of an inexperienced writer: the subjects are not continuous, and the heads are not collected in their proper places: hence the constant interruptions, resumptions, and recurrence of the misplaced parts of divided members. The author seems to have commenced writing without any digested plan, and to have proceeded without having in his mind a precise view of the objects to be embraced, excepting that one of prejudicing the public mind against apothecaries. Hence the Title seems to have been adopted from the accidental turn which the "Remarks" took, rather than from any preconceived determination.

Of the style, little can be said : more than ordinary skill is required in the artist to produce a fine texture from coarse materials : and whether or not this artist possesses more than ordinary skill may be judged by the examples which we have adduced in our critical examination. His reasonings are in general weak and inconclusive, because founded on mistaken facts : and, in more cases than one, the conclusion is even erroneously drawn from a more erroneous position. Where the matter is so bad, the manner can scarcely be better : and as the former is abusive, and misrepresented, the latter is unpolished and sophisticated.

As if the imperfections of this ill-favoured offspring of an impotent parent did not make it sufficiently disagreeable, it has been rendered more disgusting by the awkward and fantastic decorations which have been stuck on its most conspicuous deformities : yet deformed as it is, the author of its being, with much self-complacency, felicitates himself on the production of so much perfection :—such is the blindness of parental love.

He has indeed manifested much blindness to his own interest in sending it forth into the world : but, like Tiresias, his want of sight is rewarded with the gift of prophecy, and he foretells that one day or another it will become extremely popular and universally acknowledged. We fear however that his prophecies, like those of Cassandra, are fated never to be believed, and that like those of Mokanna they are not deserving of belief, being no more than his wishes thus disguised in order to promote their accomplishment.

Should our author find it expedient to make any further “Remarks” on this subject, or on our review, we must inform him that we shall not again waste our time, as it is

much occupied in a manner that we are *afraid to acknowledge*, lest it should induce a new paroxysm on him. We are aware that a young physician's views might be promoted by giving him an opportunity of entering into a literary warfare, and of again bringing himself before the Public. But should he ever (he will excuse our quoting from the *Dunciad* in preference to any other poem) produce any more

“ Nonsense precipitate, like running *lead*
That slips through *cracks*, and zigzags of the head :
All that on Folly, Frenzy could beget,
Fruits of dull heat, and sooterkins of wit.”—

“ Shall we, like Curtius, desp’rate in our zeal
O’er head and ears plunge for the commonweal ?”

No, we will plead in our excuse, as we hope he will, for being silent,

“ Some dæmon stole our pen (forgive th’ offence)
And *once betrayed us into common sense*.”—

“ Could Troy be saved by any single hand,
This *gray-goose* weapon must have made her stand.”

The author of the foregoing review pledges himself that while writing it, he had no communication on the subject with any person, and that when the MS. was completed (which is nearly three weeks since) he showed a part of it only, and to no more than one person. Hence the author alone is answerable for the opinions promulgated, and they have not been sanctioned by any body of men.

Dublin, April 29.



